

Amherst Historical Commission

Fiscal Year 2002

The Amherst Historical Commission was established by the Town, in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 40C, for the preservation, protection and development of the historical and archaeological assets of the Town. The goal of the local commission is to identify and encourage preservation of the Town's heritage, which manifests itself in buildings, structures, objects, landscapes, archaeological sites and historic districts.

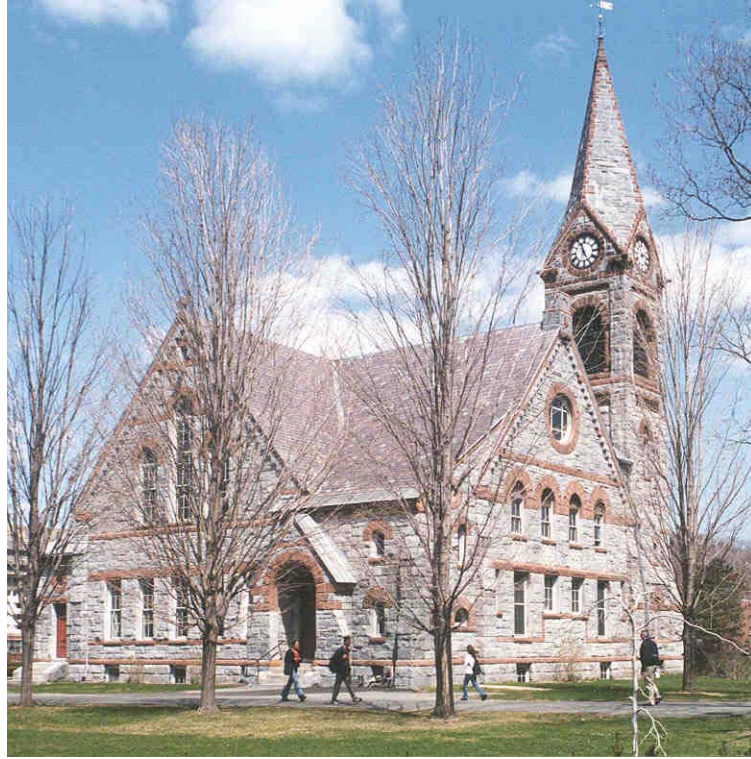
The Commission reviewed a number of demolition permit applications in accordance with the Demolition Delay Bylaw. The Commission determined that a large number of barns, sheds, chicken coops, and other outbuildings have been demolished; this has the potential to make significant changes to the streetscape and to the community's understanding of our historical development.

The Community Preservation Act was accepted by the voters last year. As a result, historic preservation, open space protection and the provision of affordable housing will each be allocated a minimum of 10% of funds collected annually from a tax surcharge of 1% on real estate assessments of \$100,000 or more, plus state contributions from Registry fees. The Historical Commission has determined that it will use its share of the allotment to fund a Landscape Survey of the entire Town. Recommendations from this survey will form the basis for future preservation goals.

This year the Commission voted to continue improving the site surrounding West Cemetery by commissioning a mural for the back wall of the Carriage Shops. The Commission intends to involve members of the community in the process of developing a mural to relate to the history of Amherst and increase the public's appreciation of West Cemetery. Muralist David Fichter, from Cambridge, was selected as the artist.

Installing signs to identify our nine National Register Districts remain a goal of the Commission. Such signs would inform the community about the variety and quality of the historic resources which make up our town.

The Commission continues to work closely with other Town boards and committees in reviewing plans and providing advice for projects such as the new People's Savings Bank on Amity Street, the downtown streetscape improvements and proposed highway realignments.



This year the Commission presented Preservation Award Certificates to four property owners in recognition of their efforts to preserve the rich architectural heritage of our community. The following awards were presented at a public meeting of the Select Board:

- The University of Massachusetts Amherst, for restoring the Old Chapel
- The Amherst Women's Club, for restoring the carriage shed at 35 Triangle Street
- Martha Dickinson Bianchi Trust, for stabilization and partial restoration of the Evergreens on Main Street
- Amy and Seth Bostock, for restoration of The Dell at 90 Spring Street.

The Commission regretfully accepted the resignation of Robert Romer. Commission members include Donald Frizzle (Chair), Perry Thompson, Sharon Carty, Edith MacMullin, and James Wald. Lynda Faye serves as the staff liaison.

Donald Frizzle, Chair
Amherst Historical Commission